High-Leverage Practices

The heart of the TeachingWorks strategy is to ensure that all teachers have the training necessary for responsible teaching. We focus on a core set of fundamental capabilities that we call "high-leverage practices."

High-leverage practices are the basic fundamentals of teaching. These practices are used constantly and are critical to helping students learn important content. The high-leverage practices are also central to supporting students' social and emotional development. These high-leverage practices are used across subject areas, grade levels, and contexts. They are "high-leverage" not only because they matter to student learning but because they are basic for advancing skill in teaching.

1. Leading a group discussion

In a group discussion, the teacher and all of the students work on specific content together, using one another's ideas as resources. The purposes of a discussion are to build collective knowledge and capability in relation to specific instructional goals and to allow students to practice listening, speaking, and interpreting. The teacher and a wide range of students contribute orally, listen actively, and respond to and learn from others' contributions.

2. Explaining and modeling content, practices, and strategies

Explaining and modeling are practices for making a wide variety of content, academic practices, and strategies explicit to students. Depending on the topic and the instructional purpose, teachers might rely on simple verbal explanations, sometimes with accompanying examples or representations. In teaching more complex academic practices and strategies, such as an algorithm for carrying out a mathematical operation or the use of metacognition to improve reading comprehension, teachers might choose a more elaborate kind of explanation that we are calling "modeling." Modeling includes verbal explanation, but also thinking aloud and demonstrating.

3. Eliciting and interpreting individual students' thinking

Teachers pose questions or tasks that provoke or allow students to share their thinking about specific academic content in order to evaluate student understanding, guide instructional decisions, and surface ideas that will benefit other students. To do this effectively, a teacher draws out a student's thinking through carefully-chosen questions and tasks and considers and checks alternative interpretations of the student's ideas and methods.

4. Diagnosing particular common patterns of student thinking and development in a subject-matter domain

Although there are important individual and cultural differences among students, there are also common patterns in the ways in which students think about and develop understanding and skill in relation to particular topics and problems. Teachers who are familiar with common patterns of student thinking and development and who are fluent in anticipating or identifying them are able to work more effectively and efficiently as they plan and implement instruction and evaluate student learning.

5. Implementing norms and routines for classroom discourse and work

Each discipline has norms and routines that reflect the ways in which people in the field construct and share knowledge. These norms and routines vary across subjects but often include establishing hypotheses, providing evidence for claims, and showing one's thinking in detail. Teaching students what they are, why they are important, and how to use them is crucial to building understanding and capability in a given subject. Teachers may use explicit explanation, modeling, and repeated practice to do this.

6. Coordinating and adjusting instruction during a lesson

Teachers must take care to coordinate and adjust instruction during a lesson in order to maintain coherence, ensure that the lesson is responsive to students' needs, and use time efficiently. This includes explicitly connecting parts of the lesson, managing transitions carefully, and making changes to the plan in response to student progress.

7. Specifying and reinforcing productive student behavior

Clear expectations for student behavior and careful work on the teacher's part to teach productive behavior to students, reward it, and strategically redirect off-task behavior help create classrooms that are productive learning environments for all. This practice includes not only skills for laying out classroom rules and managing truly disruptive behavior, but for recognizing the many ways that children might act when they actually are engaged and for teaching students how to interact with each other and the teacher while in class.

8. Implementing organizational routines

Teachers implement routine ways of carrying out classroom tasks in order to maximize the time available for learning and minimize disruptions and distractions. They organize time, space, materials, and students strategically and deliberately teach students how to complete tasks such

as lining up at the door, passing out papers, and asking to participate in class discussion. This can include demonstrating and rehearsing routines and maintaining them consistently.

9. Setting up and managing small group work

Teachers use small group work when instructional goals call for in-depth interaction among students and in order to teach students to work collaboratively. To use groups effectively, teachers choose tasks that require and foster collaborative work, issue clear directions that permit groups to work semi-independently, and implement mechanisms for holding students accountable for both collective and individual learning. They use their own time strategically, deliberately choosing which groups to work with, when, and on what.

10. Building respectful relationships with students

Teachers increase the likelihood that students will engage and persist in school when they establish positive, individual relationships with them. Techniques for doing this include greeting students positively every day, having frequent, brief, "check in" conversations with students to demonstrate care and interest, and following up with students who are experiencing difficult or special personal situations.

11. Talking about a student with parents or other caregivers

Regular communication between teachers and parents/guardians supports student learning. Teachers communicate with parents to provide information about students' academic progress, behavior, or development; to seek information and help; and to request parental involvement in school. These communications may take place in person, in writing, or over the phone. Productive communications are attentive to considerations of language and culture and designed to support parents and guardians in fostering their child's success in and out of school.

12. Learning about students' cultural, religious, family, intellectual, and personal experiences and resources for use in instruction

Teachers must actively learn about their particular students in order to design instruction that will meet their needs. This includes being deliberate about trying to understand the cultural norms for communicating and collaborating that prevail in particular communities, how certain cultural and religious views affect what is considered appropriate in school, and the topics and issues that interest individual students and groups of students. It also means keeping track of what is happening in students' personal lives so as to be able to respond appropriately when an out-of-school experience affects what is happening in school.

13. Setting long- and short-term learning goals for students

Clear goals referenced to external standards help teachers ensure that all students learn expected content. Explicit goals help teachers to maintain coherent, purposeful, and equitable instruction over time. Setting effective goals involves analysis of student knowledge and skills in relation to established standards and careful efforts to establish and sequence interim benchmarks that will help ensure steady progress toward larger goals.

14. Designing single lessons and sequences of lessons

Carefully-sequenced lessons help students develop deep understanding of content and sophisticated skills and practices. Teachers design and sequence lessons with an eye toward providing opportunities for student inquiry and discovery and include opportunities for students to practice and master foundational concepts and skills before moving on to more advanced ones. Effectively-sequenced lessons maintain a coherent focus while keeping students engaged; they also help students achieve appreciation of what they have learned.

15. Checking student understanding during and at the conclusion of lessons

Teachers use a variety of informal but deliberate methods to assess what students are learning during and between lessons. These frequent checks provide information about students' current level of competence and help the teacher adjust instruction during a single lesson or from one lesson to the next. They may include, for example, simple questioning, short performance tasks, or journal or notebook entries.

16. Selecting and designing formal assessments of student learning

Effective summative assessments provide teachers with rich information about what students have learned and where they are struggling in relation to specific learning goals. In composing and selecting assessments, teachers consider validity, fairness, and efficiency. Effective summative assessments provide both students and teachers with useful information and help teachers evaluate and design further instruction.

17. Interpreting the results of student work, including routine assignments, quizzes, tests, projects, and standardized assessments

Student work is the most important source of information about the effectiveness of instruction. Teachers must analyze student productions, including assessments of all kinds, looking for patterns that will guide their efforts to assist specific students and the class as a whole and inform future instruction.

18. Providing oral and written feedback to students

Effective feedback helps focus students' attention on specific qualities of their work; it highlights areas needing improvement; and delineates ways to improve. Good feedback is specific, not overwhelming in scope, and focused on the academic task, and supports students' perceptions of their own capability. Giving skillful feedback requires the teacher to make strategic choices about the frequency, method, and content of feedback and to communicate in ways that are understandable by students.

19. Analyzing instruction for the purpose of improving it

Learning to teach is an ongoing process that requires regular analysis of instruction and its effectiveness. Teachers study their own teaching and that of their colleagues in order to improve their understanding of the complex interactions between teachers, students, and content and of the impact of particular instructional approaches. Analyzing instruction may take place individually or collectively and involves identifying salient features of the instruction and making reasoned hypotheses for how to improve.

http://www.teachingworks.org/work-of-teaching/high-leverage-practices

Considerations for Maintaining Screening and Progress Monitoring Practices in Virtual/Remote Settings

Leveraging Existing Systems and Tools

If you are working from a school system that already has routines and practices in place for screening and progress monitoring, as a team consider these questions when deciding how to administer in a distance/virtual setting.

Considerations	Notes
Is the current screening/progress monitoring tool suitable for remote administration? • What, if any, guidance is available from the publisher regarding remote administration? • Some guidance may be available from NCII's Virtual Administration FAQs here	
How can we most closely replicate our typical, in school, screening/progress monitoring practices in a remote setting? • What adjustments need to be made?	
How will we coordinate with students and families to create an efficient and effective schedule and logistical plan?	
How will we assess students who may not have access to technology?	
What procedures will need to be in place to ensures the process yields valid, reliable, and actionable data?	
How and what data will be recorded and shared?	

Video Examples:

Below are examples of a school district in Oregon piloting two formats for screening all second-grade students with a Passage Reading Fluency.

- Utilizing Zoom Breakout Rooms to Support 1:1 Administration with Multiple Students and Assessors
- Administering Reading Passage Fluency using Screen Share in Action

For more information about these considerations and how this Oregon team created their plan see the related materials.

National Center on

INTENSIVE INTERVENTION

at American Institutes for Research ■

Intensive Intervention Implementation Review Log

Purpose: This log can be used by intervention providers or planning teams to review, document, and improve implementation of the data-based individualization (DBI) process for the group of students they serve. To monitor implementation for an individual student, see the *Student-Level Data-Based Individualization Implementation Checklists* and *Data-Based Individualization Implementation Log: Daily and Weekly Intervention Review*.

Teacher, Interventionist, or Team: _____

Date of Review: _____

Instructions: For each question below, please mark the best answer according to the anchors provided. "You" may refer to the person or team completing the form or to the person assigned the relevant task in each student's plan. Explanations and other notes may be recorded at the end of the form. Review your answers and notes to identify a) aspects of implementation that need to be strengthened and b) strategies or resources to address these needs.[1] The form can be completed as many times as deemed necessary to determine if implementation improves.

Monitoring Plan Implementation and Students' Progress

In this section, review the implementation of each student's current intervention and progress monitoring plan, as well as students' progress.

Question	No	Partially	Yes	Anchors
1. Did you collect information on the *implementation* of all components of each student's intensive *intervention* plan?	☐1	☐2	☐3	1 = **No**, not collected for any student. 2 = Collected on some students. 3 = **Yes**, collected on all students.

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[1] See the National Center on Intensive Intervention website (http://www.intensiveintervention.org/) for more information on and resources to support DBI implementation.

Question	No Partially Yes	Anchors
2. Did you collect ongoing *progress monitoring data* for all students receiving DBI?	□1 □2 □3	1 = **No**, not collected for any student. 2 = Collected on some students. 3 = **Yes**, collected on all students.
3. Did you collect *progress monitoring data* at least weekly, according to each student's plan?	□1 □2 □3	1 = **No**, not collected. 2 = Collected but not regularly or as frequently as planned. 3 = **Yes**, collected regularly according to plan (at least weekly).
4. Did the data indicate a need for *adaptation* for any students?[2] *If the answer is "No," answer "N/A" for the remaining questions.*	□1 □2 □N/A	1 = **No** adaptations needed. 2 = **Yes**, adaptations are needed. N/A = No new adaptations were needed during this review period.

Adapting Plans

Complete this section only if the team answered "Yes" to all or nearly all of the questions in the previous section.

Question	No Partially Yes	Anchors
5. Did you *identify potential adaptations* for students who needed them? *If the answer is "No," answer "N/A" for the remaining questions.*	□1 □2 □3 □N/A	1 = **No**, needed adaptations not yet identified for any students. 2 = Identified only for some students who need adaptations. 3 = **Yes**, identified for all students. N/A = No new adaptations were needed during this review period.

[2] Consider implementing an adaptation to an academic intervention when the trend line for progress monitoring data is lower than the goal line, or if the four most recent data points (e.g., four weeks) fall below the student's goal line. Adaptations may need to occur more frequently for behavior interventions, depending on the nature of the problem behavior.

Question	No Partially Yes	Anchors
6. Did you use the *data* to identify potential adaptations?	☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐N/A	1 = **No**, adaptations were made without using data. 2 = Data use was inconsistent. 3 = **Yes**, data were consistently used to guide adaptations. N/A = No new adaptations were identified during this review period.
7. Did you *implement* the intended adaptations?	☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐N/A	1 = **No**, identified adaptations were not implemented for any student. 2 = Identified adaptations were implemented inconsistently or only for some students. 3 = **Yes**, identified adaptations were consistently implemented for all students. N/A = No new adaptations were identified during this review period.

Please note any relevant information to explain the above ratings, including information on the appropriateness of the progress monitoring data (e.g., sensitivity to change) and the quality of implementation of the intervention plan and adaptations.